

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1872

Introduced by Assembly Member Coto

February 4, 2008

An act to add Section 56848 to the Education Code, relating to special education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1872, as introduced, Coto. Special education: autism spectrum disorders: clearinghouse.

Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction, with input from the University of California, the California State University, relevant fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature, the Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission on Autism, the State Department of Developmental Services, and other appropriate entities, to convene an advisory committee to develop specified recommendations that would identify the means by which public and nonpublic schools, including charter schools, may better serve children with autism, including, but not limited to, children with autism spectrum disorders.

This bill would establish the California Autism Spectrum Disorder Clearinghouse within the State Department of Education to provide evidence-based and recommended information and practices regarding the education of pupils with autism spectrum disorders. The department would be required to administer the clearinghouse in coordination with the State Department of Developmental Services and the State Department of Social Services. The Superintendent of Public Instruction would be required to convene an oversight committee to represent the major stakeholders responsible for the education of pupils with autism spectrum disorders and to perform other related duties. The bill would

require that access to the clearinghouse be provided at schools, Lanterman Act Regional Centers, diagnostic centers, family empowerment centers, and public libraries for the purpose of making resources available to families. The department would be required to utilize federal special education funding for the development and maintenance of the clearinghouse.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 56848 is added to the Education Code,
2 to read:
3 56848. (a) The California Autism Spectrum Disorder
4 Clearinghouse is hereby established within the department and
5 shall be administered by the department in coordination with the
6 State Department of Developmental Services and the State
7 Department of Social Services.
8 (b) (1) The clearinghouse shall provide evidence-based and
9 recommended information and practices regarding the education
10 of pupils with autism spectrum disorders, including, but not limited
11 to, information about and examples of instructional strategies,
12 fiscal management practices, and organizational structures
13 supporting quality service delivery.
14 (2) Information provided through the clearinghouse shall be
15 targeted to a range of audiences, including, but not limited to,
16 special and general education teachers, school administrators,
17 speech-language pathologists, school psychologists,
18 paraprofessionals, transportation specialists, parents and guardians,
19 impacted pupils, and community service providers.
20 (c) The clearinghouse shall focus on, but need not be limited
21 to, all of the following goals:
22 (1) Creating an Internet Web site modeled after proven efforts
23 within California and nationwide. The Web site shall include, but
24 need not be limited to, links to other sites with evidence-based
25 practices and resources for autism spectrum disorders available
26 electronically or in hard copy.
27 (2) Creating a toolbox of evidence-based resources and practices
28 for autism spectrum disorders.

1 (3) Featuring demonstration programs that are evidence-based,
2 culturally sensitive, and linguistically appropriate.

3 (4) Providing a toll-free referral telephone number as an
4 alternative to the Web-based model.

5 (d) (1) The Superintendent shall convene an oversight
6 committee to represent the major stakeholders responsible for the
7 education of pupils with autism spectrum disorders, including local
8 educational agencies, special education local plan areas, charter
9 schools, nonpublic schools and agencies, teachers, parents, county
10 offices of education, university researchers, private providers,
11 representatives from the State Department of Developmental
12 Services project “Autism Spectrum Disorders: Guidelines for
13 Effective Interventions,” and the Legislature. The oversight
14 committee shall do all of the following:

15 (A) Establish criteria, guidelines, and processes for the selection
16 of evidence-based resources and approve those materials prior to
17 posting them in the clearinghouse.

18 (B) Select anchor documents and resources, including the State
19 Department of Developmental Services project “Autism Spectrum
20 Disorders: Guidelines for Effective Interventions.”

21 (C) Provide ongoing advice to the department and clearinghouse
22 staff regarding the quality and effectiveness of the information
23 and resources disseminated by the clearinghouse, based on field
24 experience, research, up-to-date technology, and user feedback.

25 (D) Make recommendations regarding the content of the training
26 materials provided for regional trainers.

27 (E) Develop an online rating system, periodic surveys of users
28 regarding general and specific aspects of the functions of the
29 clearinghouse, or another means of acquiring and evaluating user
30 feedback about the clearinghouse from all targeted audiences. The
31 results of this feedback shall be used to contribute to a periodic
32 assessment of the effectiveness of information and resources
33 received through the clearinghouse Internet Web site, the toll-free
34 referral telephone number, and other means of dissemination. The
35 volume of traffic on the clearinghouse Internet Web site shall be
36 monitored periodically to determine the extent of its use.

37 (2) The members of the oversight committee shall serve without
38 compensation.

39 (e) Access to the clearinghouse shall be provided at schools,
40 Lanterman Act Regional Centers, diagnostic centers, family

1 empowerment centers, and public libraries for the purpose of
2 making resources available to families, including those who do
3 not have the knowledge or resources, or both, to establish an
4 Internet connection at home.

5 (f) The department shall utilize federal special education
6 funding, otherwise appropriated for these purposes and to the extent
7 consistent with federal law, for the development and maintenance
8 of the clearinghouse.

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